IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A connection apparatus for automatically connecting a connection source over a network to a predetermined connection destination using a trigger signal issued upon initial power-up;

wherein the connection source is a printer and the predetermined connection destination is a service center server to provide automated provides maintenance for said printer over said network;

wherein said connection source comprises:

information about said predetermined connection destination;

menus of maintenance offerings;

connecting method information; and

connecting means for making a connection request to said predetermined connection destination based on said information about said predetermined connection destination, menus of maintenance offerings, and connecting method information and, given a permission, for automatically connecting to said connection destination; said connection request including a connection source identification for identifying said connection source; and

wherein said predetermined connection destination includes plural connection source identifications for identifying a plurality of connection sources; the predetermined connection destination comprises:

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receiving means for receiving said connection request from said connection

source;

judging means which, upon interpreting said connection request, judges whether

said connection source is a predetermined connection source or not by checking said connection

source identification against said plural connection source identifications; and

permission granting means which, if said judging means judges said connection

source to be a predetermined connection source, grants connection permission to said connection

source.

2. (Original) A connection apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said

connection source is connected to said connection destination without intervention of an Internet

service provider being contracted.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A connecting method for automatically connecting a

connection source over a network to a predetermined connection destination using a trigger

signal issued upon initial power-up; wherein the connection source is a printer and the

predetermined connection destination ~~is a service center server to provide automated~~ provides

maintenance for said printer over said network;, the method comprising the steps of:

setting information about said predetermined connection destination to said

connection source in advance;

causing said connection source to make a connection request to said

predetermined connection destination based on said information about said predetermined

connection destination, menus of maintenance offerings, and connecting method information;

said connection request including a connection source identification for identifying said

connection source;

causing said predetermined connection destination to receive said connection

request from said connection source in order to judge whether said connection source is a

predetermined connection source or not upon interpreting said connection request; the

predetermined connection destination including plural connection source identifications for

identifying a plurality of connection sources; the predetermined connection destination judging

whether said connection source is a predetermined connection source by checking said

connection source identification against said plural connection source identifications;

if said connection source is judged to be a predetermined connection source by

said judging means, then granting connection permission to said connection source; and

connecting said connection source to said predetermined connection destination.

7. (Original) A connecting method according to claim 6, wherein said connection

source is connected to said connection destination without intervention of an Internet service

provider being contracted.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable program storage medium used for a connecting method for automatically connecting a connection source over a network to a predetermined connection destination, which stores a program with connecting functions, using a trigger signal issued upon initial power-up; wherein the connection source is a printer and the predetermined connection destination is a service center server to provide automated provides maintenance for said printer over said network; said program comprising the steps of:

setting information about said predetermined connection destination to said connection source in advance;

causing said connection source to make a connection request to said predetermined connection destination based on said information about said predetermined connection destination, menus of maintenance offerings, and connecting method information; said connection request including a connection source identification for identifying said connection source;

causing said predetermined connection destination to receive said connection request from said connection source in order to judge whether said connection source is a predetermined connection source or not upon interpreting said connection request; the

predetermined connection destination including plural connection source identifications for

identifying a plurality of connection sources; the predetermined connection destination judging

whether said connection source is a predetermined connection source by checking said

connection source identification against said plural connection source identifications;

if said connection source is judged to be a predetermined connection source by

said judging means, then granting connection permission to said connection source; and

connecting said connection source to said predetermined connection destination.

12. (Original) A computer-readable program storage medium according to claim

11, wherein said program further comprises a connecting function for connecting said connection

source to said connection destination without intervention of an Internet service provider being

contracted.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

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